

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15

SAM-01 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 /117 R

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EB/ORF/FSE - LRRACHT

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P 282327Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 187134

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, CA

SUBJECT: ALCAN GAS PIPELINE PROJECT: FPC AGREES TO
CONSOLIDATION WITH EL PASO AND ALASKAN GAS
APPLICATIONS

1. SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED: ON JULY 23, 1976, THE
FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION AGREED TO CONSIDER THE ALCAN
GAS PIPELINE APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC
CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY FOR A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
FOR ALASKAN GAS ALONG WITH COMPETING APPLICATIONS FILED
EARLIER BY ALASKAN ARCTIC GAS PIPELINE COMPANY AND EL PASO
ALASKA. THE CONSOLIDATION OF APPLICATIONS WILL PROBABLY
DELAY A FINAL DECISION, ALTHOUGH THE FPC HAS NOT YET
ESTABLISHED A NEW TIME-TABLE. END SUMMARY.

ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO INQUIRE OF
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THE NEB IF THEY ARE LIKELY TO AGREE TO A SIMILAR CON-

SOLIDATION OF APPLICATIONS, AND IF SO, WHETHER THIS WILL DELAY FINAL NEB RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET ON THE CONSOLIDATED APPLICATIONS AND WHEN A FINAL DECISION MIGHT BE EXPECTED.

2. ON JULY 9, 1976, ALCAN PIPELINE COMPANY FILED AN APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND

NECESSITY FOR AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE A 42-INCH DIAMETER NATURAL GAS PIPELINE AND RELATED FACILITIES EXTENDING FROM PRUDHOE BAY ON THE NORTH SLOPE OF ALASKA TO THE ALASKAN-YUKON BORDER. FROM THAT POINT, THE PIPELINE WOULD CROSS CANADA, FOLLOWING THE ALCAN HIGHWAY TO FORT NELSON, B.C. WHERE THE GAS WOULD BE DELIVERED INTO EXISTING PIPELINES FOR ULTIMATE CONSUMPTION IN WEST AND MIDWEST STATES. ALSO ON JULY 9, ALCAN ASKED TO CONSOLIDATE ITS APPLICATION WITH THOSE OF EL PASO ALASKA AND ALASKAN ARCTIC GAS WHICH ARE APPLYING FOR PERMISSION TO BUILD PIPELINES FOR ALASKAN GAS ALONG DIFFERENT ROUTES. THE EL PASO AND ALASKAN ARCTIC GAS APPLICATIONS HAVE BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION SINCE MARCH 1974.

3. IN ORDERING THAT THE THREE APPLICATIONS BE CONSOLIDATED, THE FPC COMMISSIONERS DEFERRED FOR LATER CONSIDERATION TWO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

A. DOES THE ALCAN PROJECT REQUIRE A SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)?

B. WHAT WILL BE THE TIME-TABLE FOR ISSUANCE OF THE FPC DECISION ON THE THREE COMPETING APPLICATIONS?

4. ALTHOUGH THE FPC COMMISSIONERS HAVE NOT FORMALLY DECIDED ON THESE TWO ISSUES, BOTH THE PRESIDING JUDGE AND THE FPC STAFF HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT THE ALCAN PROJECT DOES REQUIRE A SUPPLEMENTAL EIS. THE TIME ALLOWED FOR ITS PREPARATION MAY BE AS SHORT AS 30 DAYS OR AS LONG AS 180 DAYS.FYI: IT IS LIKELY THAT FPC STAFF WILL WISH TO CONSULT INFORMALLY WITH CANADIAN ENVIRONMENT AUTHORITIES REGARDING THE SECTION OF THE PIPELINE ACROSS CANADA
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UNDER A PROCEDURE SIMILAR TO THAT FOLLOWED BY INTERIOR FOR THE EIS ON THE ARCTIC GAS APPLICATION. END FYI: KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTRUCTION, LICENSES, PETROLEUM PIPELINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE187134
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PBARBIAN:MEP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760292-0655
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760712/aaaaakfn.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hackerp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 MAR 2004 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <06 JAN 2005 by hackerp0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALCAN GAS PIPELINE PROJECT: FPC AGREES TO CONSOLIDATION WITH EL PASO AND ALASKAN GAS APPLICATIONS
TAGS: ENRG, CA, US, ALCAN PIPELINE CO
To: OTTAWA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006